

Letter from Alexander Graham Bell to Mabel Hubbard Bell, June 11, 1888, with transcript

ALEXANDER GRAHAM BELL TO MABEL (Hubbard) BELL Alexandra Hotel, Hyde Park Corner, S. W. June 11th, 1888. My dear faithful little wife:

A telegram and letter at Queenstown and another here show me that I am not forgotten. Where are you now I wonder. I telegraphed to the Hotel Rivoli, Paris — from Queenstown — and wrote to you also to the same address before receiving anything from you. I hope you received both — I presume they were forwarded to you from the hotel.

I had a very comfortable voyage — no unpleasant weather — and Mr. Hitz and I were hard at work all the way over — making statistical tables from the material received from the Institutions. 58 of them replied to my Circular letter — so you may suppose I have been busy.

Dr. Thos. Gallaudet of New York was a fellow passenger on board the Aurania. I have written to the Secretary of the Royal Commission informing him of Dr. Gallaudets presence in town and of your father's presence in the Continent.

How many deaf children of deaf parents do you think I have found? 607!! and when arranged in the order of their berth they make a curve like this!

A significant curve showing an enormous increase during the last few years ending with 1880. One deaf-mute in every 34 (of the congenitally deaf) is a child of deaf-mute parents!

My marriage cards when analyzed show that of the deaf and dumb who marry — 95 per cent marry other deaf-mutes and only 5 per cent marry hearing persons. Dr. Gillet's figures in the last report of the Ill. Inst. show that in Illinois — of the deaf-mutes who marry 93 per cent marry other deaf-mutes — and only 7 per cent marry hearing 2 persons. All of

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the Scientific men to whom I wrote have endorsed my views regarding the formation of a race of deaf-mutes in America. They have backed me with splendid letters. I feel that I am strong in facts and scientific opinions to interpret them.

Please tell me about your voyage and about the accident on board the Burgogue. Why did you not answer my telegram asking if any of you had been injured? And why have you not even mentioned the names of dear little Daisy and Elsie in your letters. All that I have heard is that you are all well — and of course my dear — I am glad to know that — but won't you please tell me about the Burgogue — all about the accident. You must have had a terrible experience. The papers said that the vessel had been struck by a heavy sea, and several people killed and wounded. I telegraphed the Company in New York — and they said they had not heard of any passengers being injured — so I have felt that I must be resigned and believe that no news is good news. It would be a comfort to me to know positively however — that none of you were hurt — and won't you please vouchsafe me “Yes” or “No” — and it would be a still greater comfort to me to know some particulars of what did happen to you all. I thought of you all the time — and supposed from the American weather — that you have must had a beautiful voyage. It was quite a shock to me to read the newspaper notices — and your silence regarding the Burgogue — both in your telegrams and letters is most tantalizing. How did you all get on? and etc., etc., etc.,

Mr. Robert Lincoln (late Sec. of War — and son of Abraham Lincoln) was a passenger on board the Aurania with his daughter. There were quite a number of young ladies on board — and but for my work — I 3 might have had a nice time — flirting in the absence of my wife. As it was — however — I had too much to do — and did not even make their acquaintance. Towards the end of the voyage I asked Mr. Lincoln to introduce me to his daughter — and I found her a very nice — but delicate looking girl of 18 years of age.

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Mr. Hitz has been indefatigable all the way across and is now hard at work upon my reports. He will stay with me until the close of my examination by the Royal Commission — and will then proceed to Switzerland.

He wrote you a long german letter from Queenstown — so I suppose — that by this time you know exactly what I had to eat on board the boat! and how many times I had headache or dyspepsia! Under these circumstances it will hardly be necessary for me to enlarge upon these interesting topics — excepting to say that he will have hard work to find anything wrong with me now. I am O. K. but tired. I long to be with you all again. Write me a nice good — long letter — there's a darling — and tell me the truth — the whole truth — and anything else you like — about the Burgogue.

Love to you father and mother and Gipsy — and Elsie and Daisy.

Your loving husband, Alec. (X)A kiss for Elsie. (X) A kiss for Daisy. (X) A kiss for Gipsy. I enclose letter from Mrs. Ackers. Please answer it. Alec. I have written to Mrs. Ackers thanking her for her kind note. I said I feared I would not be able to visit Huntley Manor — as I should return to America very soon — on account of my Mother's health. I left you free — Didn't know whether you would return with me or not — or gang yer ain gait. Alec.